

Influences Bearing upon College Students Today and Directions in which these Influences Operate

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As we look upon life so we teach. What we believe, the loyalties we hold, subtly determine the content and method of our teaching. Each of us has a philosophy whether or not he has thought it through and definitely phrased it. Everything we say and do as well as what we think reflects that philosophy.

Harold O. Rugg.

The emergence of an autonomous youth culture on our college and university campuses must be seen as a phenomenon of significance in its own right, an unprecedented happening in Indian society. Young people *per se* have not been given a recognized place in this society, nor have they been considered to have a contribution to make to its life and thought. Greater significance attaches to this youth culture when it is seen as reflecting the throes of a society in transition, passing from tradition to modernity.

Of very recent origin, youth culture's full dimensions—its set of values and beliefs and ways of behaving—are still to emerge clearly. But already it has a strong social appeal to the adolescent student, who is seeking a new identity as a "college" student. On his part, there is a receptivity to the norms of that culture, a strong urge "to belong". The new culture distinguishes itself by being characteristic not of just one campus or one university, but as something in the making on many campuses at once, throughout the length and breadth of the country. Its contribution to creating a sense of nation-ness cannot be over-emphasized. Young people of different languages and subcultures, of different political and religious background are coming together through shared interests and common goals. What are some of the features of this new culture?

MILD REBELS ?

Does it seem that our college youth are serving notice to educators and parents and others of the same generation that they

Want to be different"? Are they trying to say that the customs and mores and life styles of the older generation have little meaning or relevance for them and that they want to build their own young lives around concerns, interests and even values that seem important to them? In this sense can we label them 'mild rebels' and what is the different style of behaviour they want? Certainly for youth there seems to be a blurring, if not a rejection of the old dividing lines of caste and religious affiliation. There is an impatience with the old restrictions that have to do with diet, dress and with whom one may associate. From this point of view campus life provides the ideal situation in which these new life styles may develop. It represents "islands of freedom" in a whole sea of traditionalism. For the first time in one's life there is exposure to other young people with different backgrounds and ideas—a cross cultural experience that is unlikely to occur at any other point in their lives and, in the present context, can happen only during those few hours spent on the campus. There is freedom to mix with members of the other sex—Altbach calls it a heady experience—and for a sharing of experiences in and outside the classroom (perhaps more out than in).

Compare the two life styles that are already in the making. The one on campus, less restrictive and less subject to authority. One that permits an exploration of new experiences. The other at home, the way of one's upbringing, acquiescent and unquestioning, and definitely authoritarian. The question is of crucial importance. Are young people going to be able to integrate these two life styles in a meaningful way, so that they do not have to live in two worlds at once? Can they achieve an integration at some later point in their lives? Only then will they be able to live by values, attitudes and knowledge learned in college without succumbing to traditional ways which brook no questions and have the sanction of time and authority.

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ASPECTS

Modern communication media make it easy to keep in touch with what is happening to one's counterparts in different sections of the country. This was clearly demonstrated during the peak of student agitations, when unrest spread from one campus to another across great distances testifying to a feeling of solidarity shared by students.

Superficial manifestations of a world-wide fellowship shared by students here with those abroad are seen in styles of dress and hair, tastes in music and even a common lingo¹. The term "world-wide" is used advisedly, because though it is perhaps the life-style of the American teenager that is the model for Indian students, it has also been the model for students in many other countries too. These life styles of students may seem juvenile and imitative. But it must not be forgotten that the age of the average Indian student is lower than in other parts of the world. Moreover they have not been stimulated at home or even in college to face issues and challenges in a way that enables them to make independent or well-reasoned responses.

A SEARCH FOR A POSITIVE IDENTITY

Young people are seeking a new kind of life, a life that will make for relevance and self-fulfilment in contemporary times. It is the identity of this new life that eludes them right now². There is an implicit rejection of authoritarianism up to a point. As one educator put it, "they reject us and are happy when adults criticise them". But it is not a revolt against the gerontocratic order, because such a revolt demands an admission that the older generation has failed.³ Even partial acquiescence in traditional ways nullifies the claims that there is a revolt.

There is however, a very real demand from young people to be treated as persons in their own right, not as irresponsible or non-serious, but as having ideas that are worthy of being heard. They want to be consulted, for instance, about reforms on the campus. "Students have a right to influence the decisions which affect them", is easily a common youth demand.

AN URBAN PHENOMENON

Youth culture is very much a phenomenon of the urban-based student, more to be found on the campuses of Delhi, Bombay or Calcutta than on the far flung new campuses of the interior. A degree of affluence, a measure of de-Sanskritization, to borrow a term from M. N. Srinivas, and a common linguistic bond that transcends regional loyalties appear to be prerequisites "to belong". Periodicals geared to youth interests, advertising directed to catch

the attention of youth and more recently, cinemas portraying youth themes, all help to set the pace and direction of youth culture.

It is hard to see right now how, for instance, the first generation rural student will be caught up in any definitive way in this youth culture, or whether there will evolve, instead, sub-cultures with regional loci.

CONCERNS OF YOUTH

What sort of concerns do young people share? It is known that issues like "examination reform", "student participation", redressing of a grievance of a particular group or individual and the like have served as causes for agitations or topics for debates. But what about larger issues? Have young people shown a concern for rural literacy, or for problems that poverty breeds or for blatant violations of the tenets of social justice that are so evident in society at large? Is there an awareness of their own privileged position as that very exclusive minuscule section of the population that gets to go to college? Is there a sensitivity to the lot of the underprivileged, whether this be the socially, economically or intellectually underprivileged?

A study of public issues that commanded student solidarity revealed that religious and traditional issues evoked no response at all.⁴ Does this indicate that our young people have not yet been challenged to see themselves as agents of social change?

SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME—CAMPUS INFLUENCES AS DETERMINANTS

Campuses provide the complex environment in which a student learns and develops and gains maturity. He is as much influenced by his teachers and the courses he takes as he is by the peer groups of which he becomes a part. The social culture and the values he encounters on the campus will be another force that shapes. Can these influences be analysed? Inescapably we are in the realm of the intangibles. The dictionary tells us that an influence is the capacity or power of persons or things; of action or process to produce effects on others by *intangible* or indirect means. Studies of influences in the Indian college situation are yet too few to permit assessment. Perhaps as Newcomb suggests,

they may be "too subtle for the behavioural sciences to capture in their crude net of measurement".⁵ It may well prove to be the case that influences are elusive creatures, hard to capture, lose their identity in discussions of purposes, objectives and functions of education. Again, we need data from the students themselves, from their own perceptions and evaluations of such campus influences before theoretical frameworks can be developed. In the absence of viable data, one is forced into making ad hoc hypotheses based upon the insights and experiences of a few educators, and they are offered here as a starting point for an exploratory venture in understanding and analysing these intangible forces.

HETEROGENEITY OF CAMPUS POPULATION

A factor that will complicate this analytical task is the composition of the student body, which is as heterogenous as any to be found elsewhere and which means that no generalization made about it can be pressed too far. Heterogeneity itself is most often described in terms of socio-economic levels or geographic, linguistic and communal and caste dispersions. In empirical studies of influences, more specific categorizations may be needed, if only to test the validity of the truism that "all things that students bring with them on arriving at college more fully accounts for the final product" than the other sets of factors.

Increased subsidization of higher education by public funds are putting into colleges students for whom the college experience will be of a different kind and size than those from higher income groups. By the same yardstick, colleges whose enrolment is drawn from the former group will find their resources, and ingenuity strained to the limit in their efforts to achieve educational effectiveness. Prestigious colleges, in the opinion of a noted educator, admit them reluctantly and then ignore their presence on campus.

A first generation rural student of illiterate parents could belong as well to a family of migrant labourers as to that of a sugar cane farmer, and what each will bring to college will be vastly different. The category "rural" does not tell us much about the "distance" each must travel to reach a specific educational level. Nor will college influences affect them in the same way.

A recent study made at Delhi Institute of Technology revealed that "the candidates from cities were more than six times as successful as those from villages and secured ninety per cent of the merit list positions".⁶ The findings confirm the dictum "that he who has will come to have more..."⁷, that even in education it is the rich who get richer. Education is akin to a handicap race, if maximum effectiveness is desired. Given the variation of background, they cannot all be placed on the same starting line.

EDUCATION FOR A DEVELOPING SOCIETY

The multipurposes and multifunctions of education for a developing society were identified by the two major Education Commissions. The Radhakrishnan Commission spelt out the social philosophy that must govern our educational institutions in terms of the Preamble of the Constitution. It said, "We are engaged in a quest for democracy through the realisation of justice, liberty, equality and fraternity".⁸

"The destiny of India is now being shaped in her classrooms" said the Kothari Education Commission Report and described education as the "main instrument of change", concerned with the development of human resources, as an end in itself. It said further that "the realization of the country's aspirations involves changes in the knowledge, skills, interests and values of the people as a whole". For advancements on the economic, social, political and cultural fronts, for the conversion of a tradition-bound society into a modern one, it said "nothing short of a pervasive social transformation will suffice; a wholesale metamorphosis of habits, a wrenching reorientation of values concerning time, status, money, work; an unweaving and reweaving of the fabric of daily existence itself".⁹

EDUCATION—A CRITIC OF SOCIETY

Higher education, thus becomes a servant of society. It "performs services which the supporting society requires, and its success and viability are determined by how well it performs and by how responsive it is to changing social demands".¹⁰

But its task does not end there. Education must also serve as a critic of society. As the Kothari Report states it,

“(The University’s) business is not primarily to give society what it wants, but what it needs, and obviously they are not always identical...it must always be in a state of creative tension, knowing where to interpret, where to criticise, where to pioneer, and where to support traditional values...¹¹.”

In accepting a “responsibility for the improvement of society”, the universities must *lead* society and not merely *adapt*, to employ terms used in a different context by Robert M. Hutchins.

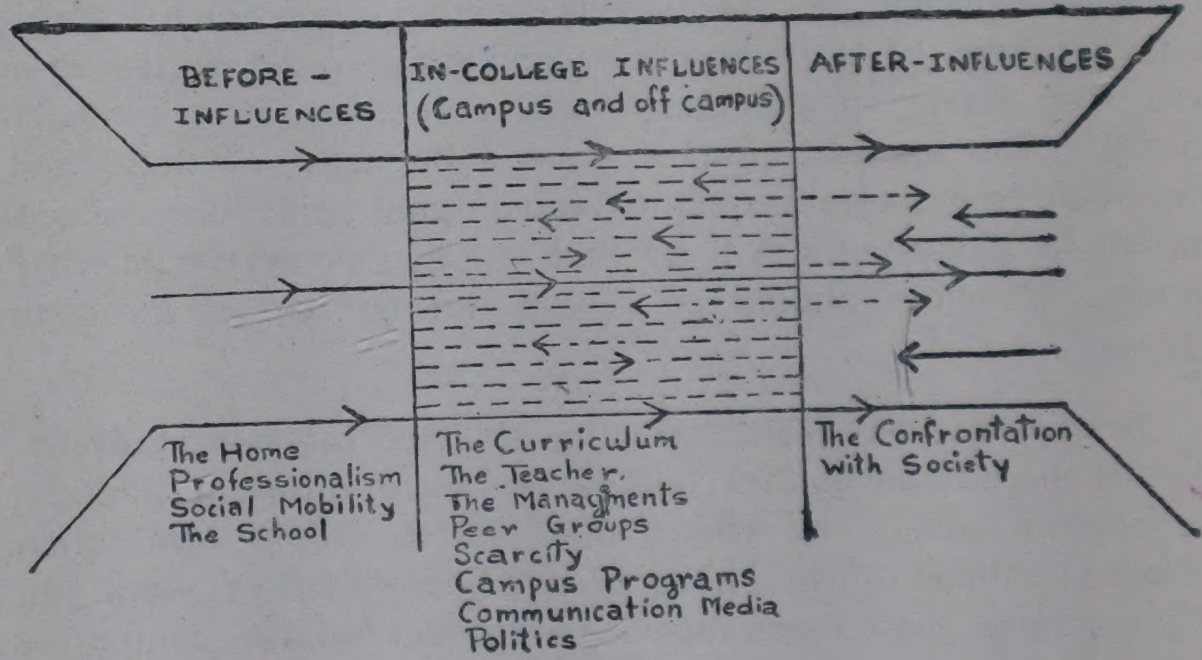
THE FRAMEWORK OF THE ANALYSIS

A discussion of “influences bearing upon college students today” cannot be carried on in a vacuum but in the context of how well they relate to the educational objectives of a transitional society. The identification of these influences will be judged as they seem to promote or obstruct educational objectives. Equally, normative judgements will be involved, judgements as to whether certain influences should or should not be part of the campus situation.

A unifying framework that suggests itself for our study is to identify the influences that operate at three different periods of the student life. The young mind is no *tabula rasa* when it arrives at college. There have already been forces at work on it, and in a sense the college receives a product whose configuration or form has already been predetermined. In a very general way some of these “Before-Influences” will be identified, particularly for the transmission of certain cultural and intellectual values and their ongoing connection with college influences. In—college influences are identified in terms of both on and off campus influences—those that operate during the time the students spend at college. The term “college” is preferred to “university” because colleges really carry the burden of undergraduate higher education and therefore exert their many influences on the greatest number of young people. Moreover, what is said about the one will be more or less valid for the other. “After Influences” are important for the reason that on leaving college, we expect that there will be a confrontation between the “educated” or “liberated”

person and the societal forces he encounters as he takes his place in society. Does he succeed as an instrument of social change, assuming that he has been imbued with cultural and intellectual and social values demanded from him by a society that looks to him for leadership in its bid for modernization? Or does he encounter anti-modernization forces of a magnitude that force him to go under, or suck him back into the void of the cave of traditionalism after a brief glimpse of the sun? Alternatively he may remain untouched by his college experience and there is thus no confrontation. The possibility that a college has failed to "touch" him must be considered to be a very real one.

THE INDIVIDUAL



Education In a Traditional Society

The Before Influences are seen as continuing into the second and third periods of a student's life. In the second period, the broken lines indicate influences that are different from those of the previous period as well as those that influence the student in the same direction as before. Some college influences continue into later life, and it is not unlikely that there may be a neutralizing of these influences as the confrontation with societal forces takes place.

“BEFORE—INFLUENCES”

I—THE HOME AND FAMILIAL INFLUENCES

In developing societies the orientation is mainly traditional, and the major influence of the family and the home are likely to be that of conservatism, in which conformity is the keynote. As Lipset describes it, the family is “usually concerned with transmitting the culture already accepted by the elders rather than inculcating into them a culture which is only in a barely incipient state”¹². The family is unlikely to accept deviant behaviour. Loyalty to its style of life is important and the fear of ostracism a very real one.

But the young person is already growing away from the traditional indigenous culture through his encounters with modernity in his own society. Intergenerational conflicts and a generation gap are part of the growing up pains of transitional societies, through the hostility the young person evinces against the “efforts of authority to impose upon him a culture with which he has no sympathy¹³. Some areas of such conflicts have been identified, such as attitudes to marriage, religion, educational and career aspirations¹⁴. Moreover, there is also evidence to indicate in what ways young people feel they can lead the older generation. “Demonstrating modern ways, showing them the uselessness of tradition”, and “scientific, rational, views and achievements” were given first and second rank in one investigation. “Abolishing superstition” ranked eighth¹⁵. What needs to be discovered is how these “ways” in which the young people feel they can lead the older generation, are internalized in their own behaviour patterns. There is always the possibility that these may turn out to be more glib repetitions.

What are the influences-invidious or otherwise-of a traditional upbringing and how do they relate to preparing the young person for grappling with the issues of creating a modern society? Given the diversity and the complexity of the home and familial situation in India, such influences are not easy to pinpoint. The economic, educational, and professional level of the family, its place in the hierarchical system and its rural or urban location and connections, as well as whether the latter are heartland or rimland, the nature of its religious affiliation and the value and attitudinal system to which it subscribes, must all be counted as determinants of

familial influences. Even the Indian nuclear family exerts influences quite different from those of nuclear families in the West, because the former has extended kinship ties that are rather like those of the joint family.

What does Modernity Mean?

Modernity, is above all a state of mind, and cannot be measured in terms of external artifices and superficial trappings, though one cannot by any means be sure that this is not the commonly understood meaning of the term, M. N. Srinivas is describing a very common, familiar situation when he writes: "An external symbol may easily be identified as modern but the inner attitudes and values that accompany them may be something else. A highly educated and efficient business manager may be consulting astrologers about his personal and factory problems. Workers in Indian factories, even those working with sophisticated machines, are known to make the same gestures of reverence which they make to their deities, before beginning the day's work. And during Dasehra machines, cars, cycles etc. are cleaned, washed, decorated with vermillion and garland¹⁶".

This dualistic approach to modernity is shared by young people, it would seem, when they are unable to make distinctions between modern things and modern ideas and values.¹⁷ A bright college senior chose to investigate, for her independent study project, the modern attitudes of college girls. The questionnaire she prepared went briskly down the line seeking their attitudes to modern dress and hair styles, and the wearing of make-up, dating, kissing and the like. When her faculty adviser gently suggested that modernity really concerned one's ideas and attitudes, and asked her to reconsider her approach to the problem, she returned a few days later to confess that she really found the whole thing to be beyond her capacity.

Democratization and Participation

A measure of democratization and participation is a mark of a modern society in which individuals are involved in the choosing and decision-making processes. Does the home situation encourage autonomous patterns of behaviour and provide a training

ground for young people in this direction? In one study the large majority of students reported to "personally respect the authority of parents".¹⁸ In another study it appeared that the dominion over which the parental authority would be exercised was significant.

In matters of "personal appearance and aids" and in the choice of friends, the authority of the parents was conceded, by the majority of students. With respect to leisure-time activities and the spending of money, more freedom from parents was demanded.¹⁹ When it comes to the choosing of a spouse, the majority of students (men and women) favour the arrangement of marriages by parents, with the consent of the person concerned. Complete freedom in the choice without consent of the parents was favoured neither by students nor parents.²⁰ As one Delhi girl described it, "Indian women haven't the guts to make decisions even when their parents permit it... Nothing in their nurture has developed-or even permitted—decision-making".²¹

The samplings cited here belong to urban-based students. One suspects that there is less evidence of the relenting of authoritarianism and therefore less influence through experiences of being involved in decision making, as one moves away from urban areas, despite recent changes in rural areas.²²

Students from rural areas have almost no say in the matter of the choice of a spouse and do not expect to be consulted. As one third year B.A. rural girl student said, "we have no part in those matters". To a question put to rural college girls as to whether they hoped to continue with their college education the following year, the standard answer one expects is: "That depends on those at home. If they send me, I shall come" or "I shall do as my father says".

Long Term Effects of Authoritarianism

What are the long term effects of patterns of authoritarianism found in the Indian family? Shils sees "the removal of the student from the authority of parents and elders in his family... the contrast between effective gerontocracy within the household and the weakness or absence of authority in daily life at college or university" as a stress-creating factor for the student".²³ It is easy for internal and external manipulative forces to step into this gap

and influence students to behave in a manner that suits their own purposes.

Another long term effect of authoritarianism must be the failure to build up skills and attitudes needed for participation in the democratic system. This is a serious deficiency in the early training of young people, as independent findings indicate that "by the end of adolescence, the political self of the average individual is pretty well established".²⁴

Secular and Rational Norms

A diffusion of secular and rational norms in the culture must become a characteristic of a society striving to become modern. These norms come from changed perspectives about man and his inherent worth and about the nature of the world. Equality, justice and freedom become operational values of a modern society. The scientific temper and an openness of mind, a receptivity to change and invocation become part of the society's way of thinking in which rigidity, faith in dogmas and stereotyped responses have no role to play.

What data do we have regarding the thinking of young people with respect to these norms? Is the invidious influence of a traditional upbringing evident? I. P. Desai's study of high school students in Poona reveals that "the pattern of the student's relation to his locality via his family and his caste is based on the same principles as those of the village communities in India".²⁵ B. H. Desai found evidence of the "element of caste operating in the formation friendship patterns" in the students investigated by him.²⁶ Prayag Mehta found that "despite certain responses that belied spoke of their being enlightened, their views of such touchy issues as cow slaughter and religious conversion raise doubts about their secular way of thinking".²⁷ He found evidence to support the view that "a great majority of the (student) activists hold conservative views. They keep committed to tradition in various walks of social life. In precise terms, their revolt is more against established authority than against the ingrained value system..."²⁸

We are perhaps forced to agree with S. Chandrashekar about the "undesirable influence of the home" in creating democratic

attitudes” and to agree with the Bombay educator who said that his main grievance against the average Hindu family was that “it did not exert any intellectual influence upon the young person and did not give him any ideas other than traditional responses with which he could face issues and challenges of today”.

From their very childhood young people are trained to look at other human beings, not as persons, but as belonging to one group or another, imbibing all the values and attitudes that create social and psychological distances between people. They are taught a world view which is unrelated to the modern scientific understanding of the nature of the world. The home does not give them a training to bring a rational, unbiased viewpoint to bear upon the events of daily life, so as to enable them to make independent critical judgements about people, issues and events. It teaches them to react emotionally, rather than rationally, so that when there is a confrontation with new ideas, or a consideration of the *raison d'être* of a certain custom or idea or life style from one tradition, they turn defensive, quite unable to view the matter dispassionately. Ambivalences in thought and motivations are familiar patterns in the transitional society. Though “home influences” have been treated here as precollege influences, in reality they are influences that continue through the college period, and interact with all the forces of that period. This interaction is bound to have an effect on the student’s receptivity to new ideas or new values relevant to contemporary times that he may be exposed to in his college experience.

II PROFESSIONALISM AND SOCIAL MOBILITY

The rapid expansion of higher education since independence has seen a change in the composition of the student population and a change in the reasons for going to college. Before 1947 a collegiate education was taken by a small ‘elite group, sent to college by well-placed families to acquire a ‘finishing’ in the liberal tradition and to fit itself to take up positions of choice. With the virtual disappearance in the post-independence period of a leisurely class of landed gentry, the middle class has found itself propelled into urging its sons, and sometimes its daughters, towards “professionalism” towards securing qualifications that would enable them to secure places in the newly opened up scientific and professional fields. That this is an influence that

virtually starts in the cradle is clear from what the head of a central school reported. She said that affluent young parents have no patience with the newfangled play methods used at the nursery school level. They want their children to get on with the business of acquiring the 3 R's.

There is evidence to show that the number of students taking education in the professional fields has increased over the years.³⁰ That this trend towards professional training is security-oriented is clear and there are three different influences that might be identified as having come on its wake. Professionalism has been at once a levelling and a gap-creating force. Those who make the grade are bound by a unifying force that is likely to transcend the barriers that hitherto have created dividing lines in society. For instance, doctors' and lawyers' colonies are increasingly a feature of the small town housing programme, which brings together families of different religious and caste affiliations. Within the extended family itself, however, the professional success of one individual of that family has enabled him to outstrip others within it, thus causing loosening of the old ties that would have kept it together.

For those students who are not able to make it to the professional college, frustration and a sense of drift has been the result. The scramble to qualify for entrance to these colleges has generated many dubious methods and malpractices, for much is at stake.

Students from lower classes and from families with no tradition of higher learning are also under parental influence towards what might be called a second or lower order "professionalism". The obtaining of a degree will make for upward social mobility and for increased job potential, and positions of political power. All this is well-known but perhaps has not yet been analysed in all its ramifications.³¹

Despite the communication and cultural gap that is going to be created between the rural uneducated parent and the educated sons (and in a very slowly increasing proportion, educated daughters too) and despite the fact that these young people shun the occupations of their parents and want better things from life³², village parents, under no illusions about rejection by their offspring or alienation from them, still want a college education for

them. One has only to witness the proud face of the turbann village parent as he escorts his son or daughter to college at admission time to know the truth of this statement. While he disclaims any understanding of the nature of the stacks of forms to be filled out or of what "college" is all about, he is just as sure that his *ladka* will be able to make sense of it all.³³

III THE INFLUENCES OF THE SCHOOL

Stricter state control of curricula and of methods of teaching and examining and in the preparation of text books has no more assured uniformity in the quality of schools than it has generated uniformity in the quality of the product that is sent forth into colleges or into the job market. There are good, bad and indifferent schools and their end products are well-developed, just plain mediocre, or extremely poorly developed for the all that they have had a schooling. Some schools seem to excel in producing intellectual morons. Some of them in the name of giving education to the poor, succeed in giving poor education to the poor in a poor way.

When a Bombay college principal suggested that marks obtained at school exams should not be the sole assessment of merit for admission to a college and that the student's potential as a debator, writer, sportsman, leader and social worker should be taken into account³⁴, he was in fact demanding an assessment of the impact of the school on the young person. It implied that schools do stimulate him to develop along these lines, and that they have even been able to do some talent scouting. With such criteria, colleges would be recruiting the elite of the elite, and probably be empty in the bargain because not more than a handful of schools claim to be doing any such thing.

Schools are geared to the "marks-getting racket"—and it is a situation that is going to continue for some time to come. Marks will continue to be the only criterion for qualifying for the next step in the onward and upward journey to better things. What must be found out is whether "marks-getting" is correlated with certain academic achievements and academic commitment. Is the student enabled to gain an understanding of the subject matter of his course through seeing it as relating to the world around him, and as an exciting exercise in turning his knowledge into skills that have uses to him and the society around him?

One suspects that the critics of our educational system would be silenced if this point could be conceded, because schools would then be pulling their weight in the direction of realizing national educational objectives. Critics might then stop talking about the "alien" nature of our education because what can be alien about knowledge which is of universal importance and gains relevance through being related to the world that the student lives in? In other words it is both the content of what is taught and how it is taught and what is hoped to be achieved through the teaching and learning process that are of the most crucial significance for a transitional society. This is an aspect of the function of our schools that cannot be said to have claimed the attention of those who plan for education and those who execute those plans. There is more evidence of the slinging of high sounding jargon than of any attempts to get down to basics and fundamentals.

In these "Before Influences" the school and the home have the major share of putting markings on the young *tabula rasa*. Later experiences will reinforce these markings but hopefully, for those who continue into college, there may be newer experiences that may erase the harmful effect on the old, as well as put on them newer, more meaningful ones.

IN—COLLEGE INFLUENCES

To the question, "what does college do for a person?" Theodore Newcomb's answer was, "Frankly, very little that is demonstrable"³⁵. And here, in essence, is the puzzle that faces the educator. A society has in its possession no more powerful instrument for effecting social change than higher education. Nevitt Sanford's words can be endorsed for the Indian situation too. He says: "If our culture and our society are to be changed at all by the deliberate application of intelligence and foresight, no agency has a better chance of initiating change than our institutions of higher learning"³⁶. Educators make implicit assumptions about the effects that the campus experience in toto will have on a student. They are sure that all the variables that go into making up the college climate, the curriculum the faculty, the administration, the peer group, the extra-curricular programme and a host of others must leave their impression on the young mind in a way that makes him different from when he first entered college. But the fact of the matter is that there is

little data to support this assumption, or to tell us precisely what types of effects colleges do have on young people. There may be a gulf, unknown to educators, between the influences actually taking place and the ones they think are taking place or would like to see do so. They may even lull themselves into a sense of complacency about the first.

COLLEGES AS PART OF THE SOCIAL MILIEU

Colleges and students as part of the society and culture in which they exist, must necessarily reflect the norms and values of that society. In a transitional society, this would imply that the mores and values of a traditional society will make their presence felt in campus life.

As initiators of social change colleges are also expected to influence students in directions that enable to accept the values and attitudes of a modern egalitarian society. Students must learn new ideas about the nature of the world. Now, the capacity of a college to influence students in these days rests upon the capacity of that institution to provide for a contra-traditional environment, in so far as tradition conflicts with the dimensions of modernity.

To what extent can colleges achieve such a separation from society? Can colleges educate young people to the abilities needed for the creating of a society in which democratic and secular values are held high though colleges at the same time may reflect a different set of values? Can they do something more than function as vehicles for the transmission of knowledge? To what extent can they prepare a student for receptivity to ideas that are different from those he has already been exposed to? Does a college give its students an adequate grounding or base for development of his personality so that new responses can be made to situations he will face in the "multitudinous aspects of his natural, social and cultural environments" without going to pieces or becoming defensive or "falling back on earlier, primitive reactions?"

Philip Jacob found that the values and beliefs with which an American student leaves college are not very different from those with which he enters college. He says : "The changes which have been observed—moving towards a greater uniformity and at the same time somewhat more flexibility of social outlook are mainly

changes on the surface of personality. They do not really involve the fundamental values which shape a student's life pattern. The weight of the evidence indicates that actually very little change occurs during college in essential standards by which students govern their lives. The values with which they arrive and which are the integral elements of their personality, are still there when most students leave...most students remain fundamentally the same persons, with the same basic value judgements".³⁷

There is no data to tell us how this works in India. We suspect that since the college experience in all its aspects is so different from what the student encounters outside in society at large, students' attitudes and values do undergo some modification. In some cases, there may be a radical change. In the majority, it may be that the old ideas and values are now held in a different way, seen in different perspectives, because college has given them an opportunity to view them somewhat more objectively than before.

I. THE INFLUENCE OF WHAT IS STUDIED—THE FORM AND CONTENT OF COLLEGE COURSES

Absence of Well defined Aims

How is the curriculum put together in a typical Indian university situation? What considerations govern the prescribing of a particular syllabus at any given year, level or in a given discipline? Is there an attempt to relate the syllabus to the short-term and long term needs of the student? What does a given course seek to get across to the student?

Often boards of studies prepare syllabi in their own disciplines on familiar considerations of the 'popularity' of the subject, of the job potential for teachers of that subject, of the selling of textbooks of a specific authorship—though these need not add up to points of negative value. Some boards are more progressive than others in periodically upgrading their courses. In fact the overall rate of eliminating "deadwood" among courses has accelerated somewhat in the post independence period. Many courses that are created by good and competent teachers are prompted by a desire to give their students the benefit of their own experience and scholarship—the best of what they know.

Few universities or boards of studies have clear-cut, well-defined goals or objectives which determine the structure of their curricula. Katz's observations regarding curricular procedures in American universities has relevance here. He says, there has been little systematic thinking about why the body of knowledge should be composed as they now are and what the body of knowledge means in terms of student learning''³⁸. The recommendations of the workshops in the modernization of the syllabi of many disciplines being held currently at universities in the different parts of the country under the sponsorship of the University Grants Commission may be taken as evidence of some long overdue systematic thinking about curricula and what is expected from them.

Job oriented Education ?

Universities have still to wrestle with the oft-heard demand for job-oriented education, and the demand for substantial revision in the curricula that make it possible to integrate the general and liberal courses of study with vocational studies. "What is required", it is said, "is to bridge the gap between the professional education and general education in our colleges and universities... an interdisciplinary sequence of courses with judicious mixture of general and vocational education at the undergraduate level''.³⁹ The "new education" is seen in terms of the correlating of vocational education with regional man-power needs and vocational guidance. The availability of vocational guidance services will enable "students to discover their own aptitudes", and "arrive at a better understanding of their own-life goals, their abilities and interests, and the other assets and liabilities including socio-economic ones, as well as about the world of work''.⁴⁰ The "new education" will have, among other things, it is hoped, the effect of: 'deglamourising white collar jobs, and helping to prepare an individual to work effectively''.

Empirical data will be needed to support the claim that effects as described above can or do take place as a result of mere curricular changes. How best can a "work ethic" consonant with the needs of a developing society be communicated to students? How does one create in them a "high concern for Achievement" which is correlated with the rapid economic growth of a nation? How does one communicate a sense of dignity of labour when

tradition sanctions a stratification of occupations? These and allied considerations, it seems must be at the very core of any job-oriented educational scheme. It is these effects that such education will have to communicate.

Moreover it will not be easy for universities to be responsive to the man-power needs of a given region. This has not been a part of its responsibility ever before and will demand a whole new infrastructure. Universities will have to institute procedures that make quick changes of courses possible if they are to keep up with the fast-changing needs of a region. The present cumbersome procedures are likely to make a projected course operative when its need has long since disappeared.

How Students Choose their Courses

Students select their courses for a whole variety of reasons. Some find courses that fit their interests and aptitudes and we expect that they will get maximum satisfaction from them. Many look for courses with "job potential" and this is a shifting thing — in the humanities for instance, it may shift from history to geography to the languages.

"Economics" is perceived by many to be the "open sesame" to bank jobs. English literature is a popular choice where students intend to return to the villages for school jobs. Many a rural student has seen political science and law courses as the path to political involvement and positions of power. Some courses "sell" because of a department's campaign to attract students to its courses. Others are looking for "easy" courses, and those where extensive notes are given or those which are "guaranteed scoring" courses. A student survey indicated the long arms of the family intruding even in one's choice of courses.⁴¹ And we certainly have our own versions of this campus talk :

I wanted to take 10-B this fall so I could get into 116 next year but the only section I could fit into my schedule was filled; so I'm going to take 7-A and get that out of the way. Did you know that you could substitute 24-C for 22-D and count it towards your natural science requirements? Freshmen take it with the permission of the instructor. That's where all the Phys. Ed. majors go.⁴²

This is the manner in which students arrive in their respective classroom through their choice of subjects and this is what the teacher has to work with, to achieve something more than just getting through the examination.

Some Specific Course Contents : What They Do and Can Do.

Teachers have too often used the constricted nature of our curriculum frame works as an excuse to cover up stereotyped and ineffectual teaching. We have assumed that creativeness and a search for relevance can have no part in it. It does seem that the "strait jacket" excuse has been over worked. And in any case, three decades of independence and two major education commission reports later, the system is still with us and is likely to be so for some time. A new look at the whole situation is surely indicated.

"Finishing the portions" is a commonly heard objective of teachers, which tell nothing of how this feat is to be accomplished or of what orientations will be brought to bear in the teaching of a given course. Whatever be the nature of the set syllabus, there is no ban imposed on a teacher who tries to integrate his courses with the student's own environment and to give him insights that would relate to his personal life and to that of the society in which he lives.

V. K. Gokak says about the much-needed academic reorientation that "Every academic discipline is an approach to a segment of reality...the student has to appreciate the truth of his subject or its many sided intellectual implications, its beauty which generates his enthusiasm for it, its skills (and every subject from literature to engineering has its relevant skills, just as every subject, even the most dismal, has an aspect which stimulates enthusiasm and a feeling for it) which enable him to put his knowledge of theory and practice to gainful use, its value so that he is aware of the social implications of his study..."⁴⁸

In suggesting some possible orientations for teaching the contents of certain specific courses, we are looking for ways in which the knowledge a course gives can be related to the student's intellectual and socio-cultural situation and to his own needs and his development, as well as how it might change or re-inforce the values and attitudes with which he arrives in the classroom.

Language Courses

1. English—A Link Language

The acknowledged (and unacknowledged !) place of English in the life of the nation and its people has not been able to earn it general acceptability nor dispossess it of its alienism. Nevertheless it is a universally taught subject and can give a student:

- (i) a working knowledge of the language that will enable him to use the literature in the various disciplines written in it;
- (ii) a medium of communication that transcends regional barriers;
- (iii) a window on the world in view of the international dimensions English has now assumed;
- (iv) an acquaintance with the culture and the value system which English literature expresses;
- (v) an instrument for deparochialization, whereby an acquaintance with other styles of life and value systems may serve to broaden his horizons, and replace particularistic values with universal ones. Indo-Anglian literature, and translations into English from the regional languages may serve this purpose within the national context;
- (vi) a skill that has pragmatic uses, not the least of which is the employment opportunities it brings.

Regional Language Courses

- (i) a degree of proficiency and articulateness in the language which will enable him to function effectively in a prescribed regional situation;
- (ii) an appreciation of the intellectual and socio-cultural dimensions of the region of the language;
- (iii) an instrument of communication with the masses — a two-way affair in which one is enabled to keep in touch with how the masses are reacting to forces around them as well as a means to reach them for communicating new ideas and new perspectives to them;

- (iv) a medium through which he can be sensitized to the lot of the common man and the problems that confront him. The appearance of Dalit Literature in Marathi is a case in point.
- (v) a medium through which the values of a modern egalitarian society can be spread. Hari Narayan Apte's novels in Marathi performed this function in the early twentieth century. During the 1930's-1950's the writings of Sane Guruji in Maharashtra had a liberalizing effect on a whole generation of college students, creating a band of dedicated social reformers and thinkers, active today in bringing about an awareness and acceptance of the tenets of a liberal philosophy. More recently, the DMK demonstrated the maximum exploitive use to which a regional language can be put to spread one kind of ideological viewpoint.

Mental, Moral and Social Science Courses

In the precollege period a student accepts from his family and society, his conception about himself, his culture and its ethical principles. Stimulation to think about these matters for himself, and to work out answers to questions and doubts can come from social science and philosophy courses and in this respect can be a challenging experience for teacher and taught. But the general impression one gets from the teaching of sociology or political science is that it is pedestrian and mundane. The caste system and democracy are not treated as living, breathing things among us, but looking at the way they are projected, they could be for all one knows something that belonged to some remote island in some bygone age. And yet the fact remains, that mental, moral and social sciences courses lend themselves most readily to involvement of the student with his studies because they deal with subject matter of his own personal acquaintance.

Natural Science Courses

The teaching of natural science courses have too long been related only to a study of principles and factual information, a wading through masses of formulae and calculations and the writing of laboratory reports. It is suggested that the teaching of natural science courses has performed very poorly the function of

communicating the spirit of these sciences, of creating a scientific temper of mind, which is able to relate the mode of scientific thinking to one's everyday life.

As a counteracting agent for irrationalism and unscientific and illproven notions, the teaching of natural science courses have almost a sacred charge to bring about a diffusion of the scientific way of thinking. A Gujarat University professor confessed to finding the greatest difficulty in teaching the philosophy of science course, because his students had not the faintest notion of what the scientific discipline meant. Bangalore University's project to track down "unusual" phenomena should prove a worth while experience to students and faculty alike in a demonstration of how the scientific method works.

In terms of proximity of the subject matter to the student's life, in the natural sciences we are at the opposite end from the social sciences. Social science discussions deal with things he knows first hand, even if he has not pondered over them. There is an utter "remoteness" when we consider scientific ideas and conceptions and modes of thought vis a vis those a student has, if he has been reared in the traditional manner. As K. Mukherjee says,

"...the general Indian attitude towards knowledge process... its inability to relate knowledge-process to the causal interactions of the material world is one the major stresses affecting the educational system".⁴⁴

II. INFLUENCE OF THE TEACHER

(1) *The Classroom Situation—The Informational Function*

The teacher's responsibility for the formulation of courses that they are to teach is held at a minimum through the system of prescribed syllabi of topics to be covered and textbooks to be used and is perceived by them as being limited in this respect. Already a distance is created between the teachers and the courses they are to teach and the teachers see their own function as centering around the presentational aspects of the courses, as contrasted with the communicative aspects, and as related to preparing students for the examinations. Within this context, teachers will

vary as to how well or poorly they do this job, if judged by the results they get. With some teachers, examination-orientation will be considered to be their one and only responsibility. But classrooms can also be used in a personal way. A teacher may use it to give vent to his prejudices, contempts, vanity or to satisfy his desire for being popular. Politically-minded teachers have not hesitated to use the class-room for peddling their own brands of ideological orientations.

The majority of teachers, by virtue of their second or third degree see themselves as "experts" in their fields, a frame of mind which effectively prevents further pursuit of things academic. And with them, the lecture method lends itself well to a talking down to students who are looked upon as not having a thought worth the name in their heads, a group of noisy, apathetic, bored young people, who are there by the grace of their parents or a state-supported scholarship aid program. (Classroom manners are notoriously bad and disrespectful to the teacher, one must agree). In a classroom a teacher does not expect any questions to be raised of any of his views challenged. It is essentially a one-way communication process, in which there is no feedback to know how the student is responding to the subject matter. At a student work camp, at one of the informal evening discussion sessions, student wanted to know why managements hired incompetent, apathetic teachers. The obvious response to that one was that the incompetence set in after the teacher was confirmed in his job, the point at which the dynamism and effectiveness shown in the first two years of his teaching just evaporated. Some teachers resort to talking above the head of students in an attempt to impress with their erudition. The lecture method is so ingrained in our system that a tutorial class, a discussion group or even a seminar can easily descend into this one-way process, with vestiges of a brahmanical arrogance still retained. In fact, resistance to student evaluation of teachers has stemmed from this attitude of teachers. "What do the students know that they should be allowed to evaluate us?" they ask.

The Malady of Giving Notes

The teacher, who through popular demand turns his classroom session into an exercise in notes-giving (a form of uncorrected dictation!) focuses attention on one grave ailment of the classroom

experience. This is a type of training that is given in many schools whereby the student becomes conditioned to receiving morsels of precooked diet and the practice continues into college. Some students rely solely on these notes, because they have for one reason or another found no access to textbooks. But assess the long-term effects of this practice. We are creating "intellectual cripples", by not giving them a training in the independent pursuit of knowledge and a self-reliance that will stay with them as part of a basis for continuing education, not to mention the experience of joy in discovering facts for oneself. It is the very poverty of the learning experience so created that should be viewed with concern.

Gaudino's indictment about the total classroom situation is harsh, but not without justification. He says, "The most important fact about the Indian students' education is that he is untouched by it. It makes no permanent impression. Nothing is changed through the empty years of study..... He is as void of ideas and of an informed curiosity as he is full of partitioned bits of unassimilated information and contrived questions⁴⁵....." Who bears the responsibility for this state of affairs ?

The Great Enigma—Where do we fail?

Are there not wider aspects of the teaching of the curricular content that have eluded our teachers? The content of our courses are for the greater part modern, secular and rational. The courses are sufficiently up-to-date and represent in their prescribed reading lists the best of the thinking in that discipline or that subject. In other words, the orientation of the course content cannot be said to support irrationalism, parochialism, obscurantism or to promote regional chauvinism. Moreover, throughout the educational world, there is a degree of universality about assumptions, course contents and requirements. If differences are found from university to university, they seem to be more differences of degree than kind — and in any case the differences are not of a magnitude that would create a widely varying end product.

The question that confronts us is whether the teaching of these courses has been communicated to the students in a manner that aids the development of skills, attitudes and values needed for a modern society? Has this been one of our concerns at all, in the

classroom? Put differently, are we using modern courses for "modern" purposes?

Writing about three of the six subjects prescribed in the B.Ed. syllabus of the Poona University, namely Philosophical and Sociological Foundations of Education, Psychological Foundations of Education and Methods of Instruction and Evaluation procedures, Baba Adhav, a noted social reformer of Maharashtra offers these pertinent comments. He says,

"The most obvious inference that can be drawn from a perusal of this list is that it serves as an easy tool in the hands of professors of philosophy and sociology to impress upon the teacher trainees the inviolability of the old social order and this under the specious umbrella of *Adhyatma*! There is no mention whatsoever in this syllabus of parliamentary democracy, nationalism, the scientific spirit of enquiry or secularism".⁴⁶

These observations could equally well apply to the teaching of courses in the humanities and the sciences. Teachers, college or school, cannot communicate to their students, cognitive structures and values orientations which they have not internalized in their own lives. Such internalization presupposes a face to face confrontation with issues of traditionalism and modernism. It implies an intellectual honesty and integrity in working out these issues through to their ultimate solutions. A mere mumbo jumbo style repetition of high sounding axioms such as "the synthesis of modern and traditional values" or "the validity of traditional norms for modern times" yields nothing. One has to get down to finding out what this synthesis means in concrete terms and grapple with all the issues that will emerge from this search. Then alone can there be integration of modern values into the mainstream of one's thinking and acting. But we are a long way off from that achievement. Gaudino's comments about the Indian teacher cannot be dismissed summarily. He says,

"He has an untouched, unexplored, unassaulted mental and emotional security—the security of complete isolation from unsettling thought".⁴⁷

Here is the greatest single challenge that teachers of a transitional society must be confronted with—but the question is

how can they be roused to that healthy scepticism that marks the beginning of certainty ?

Individual Teacher

In any otherwise dismal picture, the bright spot is provided by the dedicated seriously motivated teacher whose influence may be too subtle for the student to identify in any definitive way while he is still a student but which draws him to that teacher, and which remains with him long after details of the encounter are forgotten.

Students, for all their immaturity, have an uncanny ability to sort out teachers according to criteria that may or may not have relevance to the educative process. The case of the note-giving teacher has already been cited. For the immediate purposes of the examination, his methods may have value, but the impact of his teaching has to be questioned. The illprepared teacher is spotted at once. The competent teacher needs no build-up. The clarity of his presentation, the way his subject-matter is organized and his ability to communicate are identified at once. He also brings to his courses an orientation, which has a carryover value that goes beyond the confines of preparation for the examination, that ever-present spectre of our system. Even here, examinations have been all too often treated as terminal points in learning, though one dares say that even a bored examiner might sit up and take notice of the evidence of a more comprehensive grasp of the subject matter in the papers he is assessing. The teacher has a wide choice of orientations he might bring to a course. Katz has suggested the course may be "oriented toward method, toward content, history, the present, the general, the specific, theory, application"⁴⁸. A teacher has to stimulate his students to think, to raise questions and find to them. He has to relate the subject-matter to the world of the student, to help him to see connections and relevance of classroom studies to life. There are teachers who achieve this and establish a relationship with the student, in which the learning process becomes a shared adventure, whether it be in the classroom or in impromptu sessions in the corridor. It is this teacher who perhaps has the most lasting influence on his student, though we are reminded that "charisma, competence and influence do not necessarily go hand in hand".

Teacher's Multidimensional Role

A teacher may find himself thrust into roles not of his own seeking. When treated as a counsellor by a student, he finds himself advising on matters that are not strictly of an academic nature. It is not uncommon for a village parent to force the role of *in locus parentis* upon a teacher by announcing that from now on, he is the 'ma baap' of his ward. This is no attempt at flattery or self-effacement. It means that the authoritarian role is now given to the teacher for the duration of the college, and he is expected to use this authority. The more sophisticated parent says it less baldly but nevertheless expects the college and the teachers to set matters of discipline and moral behaviour right. Not infrequently they expect them to make up for all the failures of the home to inculcate moral values.

A teacher serves as a model to his students in many different ways. We do not know too much about the precise way in which he may influence his students through his personality traits, but we do think that he is able to communicate to them his sense of purpose his intolerance of shoddy ways whether of thinking or behaviour, his sense of punctuality and his attitude of "let's get on with the business in hand, let's do it well", so that it leaves a mark on some responsive students.

A popular teacher, making a distinction between intellectual and moral values, claimed that his concern was only the former. He said that he generally told his students that his function was to give them an "understanding" of the subject and that it was none of his business if they resorted to unfair means in the examination. One wonders if such a dissociation is really possible and whether a teacher can disclaim any responsibility for the inculcation of moral values, even indirectly. The teacher's style of behaviour on campus is easily adjudged by a student for its moral overtones. His integrity, honesty, good neighbourliness and concern for others is reflected in what he says and does. There must be, it would seem a carry over "influence" of the practice of these virtues, but in what exact way it affects the students, it is hard to say.

We have only explored the positive side of the influences a teacher may have on a student. But undoubtedly, there is the negative side to it, too. A teacher may become unpopular for a whole range of reasons—from poor teaching, and the practice of

unfair means to callousness to students in general and in particular. These need to be explored at length.

Freud's words sum up the total position about teachers rather neatly. He said:

"I do not know what aroused our attention more; the scientific subject matters we were presented with or the personalities of our teachers With many of us the road to learning led only via the personalities of our teachers. Some of us remained struck on this road and for a few of us why should we not confess it?—the road was for this reason permanently blocked. We wooed our teachers or we turned away from, imagined sympathies and antipathies on their part which probably did not exist. We studied their character and fashioned and misfashioned our own in reference to theirs.....At bottom we loved them very much if they gave us any reason for that at all; I do not know whether all of our teachers observed this".

III. THE INFLUENCES OF MANAGERIALS

1. THE CHARACTER OF THE COLLEGE

Everyone readily grants that there are differences to be found as one moves around from one campus to another, though departmental dealings with them, through the application of a single yardstick for all, disregard these differences. The character of a college will depend upon its geographical location, the degrees and areas of specialization it offers, its physical plant and whether it is coeducational, residential and what it costs to go there. These variables will interact with two others—the aims and objectives of the college as reflecting its philosophy of education and the composition of its student body as determined by its admission policies that emanate from this philosophy.

How does a college see its function? Does it have explicitly stated aims and objectives? Does it have a sense of mission and what is the nature of this mission? Does the college set itself on a path to realize its goals? Does it see its mission as that of providing influences which will affect the total individual? Does it withstand or resist political and social pressures so that it is not deflected from any of these paths?

There is an implicit assumption that will have to be made here—the assumption is that a degree of congruency does exist between national educational objectives and those of any college.

To assess the character of colleges we might think of an intellectual—liberal orientation and see how colleges fit into such a grouping. By “intellectual” are meant things academic, which may or may not include a stimulation to develop creativity and an ability for critical analysis. By “liberal” is meant those values and attitudes that are associated with modern democratic societies.

In the first group we expect to find colleges where standards of academic excellence are maintained through a well-organized teaching program. The teachers are above average, and have a sense of commitment to their work. Discipline is good and expectations from the students in terms of work and attendance, are high. Extra-curricular activities are varied and interesting and the college deliberately seeks to make the college experience a rewarding one for the student. Through a cosmopolitan student body, it seeks to utilize the factor of peer group influences to the maximum. Competition to enter these colleges is keen.

There will not necessarily be a degree of direct concomitance between intellectual and liberal orientations in colleges described here. Some intellectually-oriented colleges are more conservative than others. Some, while maintaining academic excellence, express the cultural norms and identity of the auspices under which they are run. Colleges that are high on both intellectual and liberal orientations are among the best in the country and though privately run, are not tainted with the brush of parochialism described in the next section. We suspect the “modernizing” influence on students is the greatest in these colleges.

In the second group, we could include colleges that are geared to the business of getting a student through the four years of college with minimum fuss, to the attainment of that coveted degree. These colleges provide the formal structure that enable a student, once enrolled, to go straight through without obstruction or impediment from failure to fulfil requirements. Spoon-feeding and dictation of notes replace teaching and requirements such as attendance, are minimal. The extra-curricular program is poor and a “helping hand” in the examinations, with the concurrence of the management is not unknown. Such colleges are the haven of the

employed student and those who drift through college. The intellectual-liberal orientation is low, but one is not sure that there is even a conservative orientation. The student is relatively untouched one way or the other, as he passes through this soulless "degree-getting" factory.

In the third cluster, we find colleges that fit in between these two groups. Teachers are involved in the job of teaching but nothing beyond. Students do reasonably well in the examinations but are not challenged to learning as a continuing or exciting process. While these colleges might rate average on intellectual orientation, they are more likely to be conservative than liberal, reinforcing the conservative value system with which the student comes to college.

In summing up, we might venture to hypothesize that while the college with liberal orientation is also likely to be intellectually-oriented, the reverse need not be true. Commitment to secular and rational norms are still things of the mind, not yet "articles of faith" in this developing society.

2. PAROCHIALISM

As the demand for higher education has spread, there has been created a whole range of educational institutions founded by individuals and private bodies, whose ostensible motive for doing so is to bring education to the *janata*. As Gould says,

"..... an important consequence of their enterprise is that schools have been brought into being in places where, given the poverty and apathy of local populations, their existence would otherwise have been unlikely".⁵¹

Thus a service is performed and an opportunity made available to young people to enter the portals of higher education, to come under its varied influences.

It can be maintained with adequate empirical substantiation, however, that educational institutions are being used to advance the fortunes of particular caste or communal groups or by local politicians to get personal and or partisan gains. Some "privately" managed colleges reflect the sectarian and partisan organization of their localities... (They) have been vehicles for the politicisation of

education. Both directly, as a political resource for party cadres, supporters and patronage, and indirectly, as an instrument 'for partisan prestige, benefaction and influence, private colleges have played an important role in local politics'.⁵²

Some of the influences that are brought to bear on students through the involvement of educational institutions in local politics may be analysed :

- (i) In a very limited sense the politicization of education has given some groups in the caste structure an awareness of the gains that education can bring to them and an awareness of their constitutional rights which they now have little hesitation in demanding. The sense of power these groups develop, through the starting of their own educational institutions has given them a new sense of self-identity and self-respect which very easily communicates itself to its students. For groups who have been outside the pale of society and who have suffered deprivation of every imaginable kind for centuries, this kind of influence cannot but be seen as a positive one. The charismatic influence of the leader of the group may be reflected in the name of the college and the image in which its young people are trying to mould themselves.
- (ii) The substandard nature of the education given through many of the institutions started by local societies or groups cannot be denied—an inadequate physical plant, with ill-equipped libraries, poor classrooms and laboratory facilities, and teachers with less than minimum qualifications. Conditions of imparting education may deteriorate to the extent of mass copying being actually carried out under the auspices of the management.

It must be emphasized that running substandard institutions is not the monopoly of any single group or town or even city, lest one be tempted to make such a correlation. They can be found almost anywhere.

- (iii) The Kothari Education Commission saw two main assets of privately managed educational institutions: "Strong ties with the local community on whom they depend for support" and "loyalty of teachers who, unlike in government or local

authority service are recruited to... .. the individual institutions."'. These factors do not always turn out to be blessings in disguise. Local pulls and pushes and extraneous issues have a way of entering campus life, through this connection with the local community and proving more often than not to be a divisive force on the campus. Teachers recruited locally also increase faculty immobility and the chances of an institution's accumulating "dead wood" among the faculty are increased. In terms of the effects of these factors upon the student body, one expects to see the main function of the college recede, as preoccupation with local problems engage the attention of management and faculty.

- (iv) Privately managed educational institutions may have "bad and even unscrupulous managements". It is a commonly known fact that educational resources in some of the locally-managed institutions are openly exploited for caste, communal or political gains. The effect of such blatant malpractices, and they are legion, which are carried on with official sanction cannot but have serious and damaging longterm effects on young minds. The lines between right and wrong become blurred, in which they learn to offer justifications for wrong-doing. Again, as Rudolph and Rudolph point out," why should a student conditioned to believe that the political services he renders are his most important academic contribution accept the verdict of such a non political criterion of performances such as marks?"⁵³

Students and faculty members in institutions of the type described above who would like to be left alone to pursue their academic life to the exclusion of involvement in non-academic matters, may not find it possible to do so. Sometimes they cannot help but be diverted from their academic work.

- (v) There are many privately managed educational institutions that give the best education in the country. Their contribution to the national life is acknowledged and applauded. But in so far as privately managed institutions reflect sectarian and partisan loyalties they cannot, in the nature of the case, be sources of modernizing influences for the students. They must "fail in a crucial manner to advance

the modernization of the educational system and society".⁵⁴ This observation made in the report of a privately managed institution in Mysore state amounts to a very serious indictment of any institution where such conditions prevail.

The authors of the study held out little hope for the circumvention of such forces. They say,

"In our view, modern curricula, modern methods of teaching, modern building and modern laboratories, well-trained teachers with Indian and foreign qualifications and so forth do not guarantee that traditional and particularistic loyalties will not persist in such an unseemingly uncongenial environment".⁵⁵

IV. STUDENT PEER-GROUP INFLUENCE

COLLEGE ATMOSPHERE

An implicit assumption made in higher education is that students will learn from each other. It is also assumed that a socially heterogeneous student body will promote the values of an egalitarian society, because in the "free" atmosphere of the college campus there is a blurring of the lines that normally separate persons from one another in society at large and a greater intermingling of young people of widely varying backgrounds. The modes of interaction between young people will be varied and it is thought that changes in attitudes, values, interests and perspectives will occur as a result of this interaction. The term *peer group* is defined by Newcomb to mean "any set of two or more students whose relationships to one another are such as to exert influence upon them as individuals"⁵⁶

There is as yet little data on which to base the validity of these assumptions. We want to know if peer-group influences are actualities or just fond hopes. We may explore the situation briefly to discover how they exist on our campuses.

SOME CONDITIONS OF PEER-GROUP FORMATION

Certain generalizations made about social class divisions in English universities could also be true of caste, communal and economic divisions in the Indian context. These are:

- (a) Students within the university are in general 'cut free' from their family background so that many social class clues are missing.....
- (b)students do not in general discover the more obvious 'indicators' of socio-economic classes in casual relations.
- (c) Members of social classes do not always meet one another in the institutional context—so that the preceding points may for some never need to be taken into account,⁵⁷

The first two observations relate to conditions that will aid the formation of peer-groups. The third relates to 'homogeneous pockets' within the campus heterogeneous situation. It has been described as 'intra-institutional segregation'.⁵⁸

All three are operative on our campuses.

What other factors are significant in the formation of peer-groups?

- (i) Pre-college peer-groups are likely to continue into college for some time at least. They may be school, village or town or extended kinship peer-groups. Later regrouping is possible. Language, caste and community is as likely to be the basis of the regrouping as not. English medium students from many different regions stay together in a regional language situation and easily admit newcomers to the group.
- (ii) The formation of peer-groups in college itself depends upon the "selectivity" factor exercised by the institution. The composition of the student body itself on a campus is determined by college admission policies and in turn this condition determines what types of peer-groups might form. Some college campuses are more homogeneous than others.

Again, the opportunities the college provides for inter personal relations to take place will determine the nature of peer-group formation. Shared work camp experiences, sports and dramatic activities and others of the kind provide this type of opportunity.

The hostel experience can be a potent factor in peer-group formation. The sharing of living quarters by a group of students drawn from many varying backgrounds provides opportunity for

peer-groups to be formed across socio--economic and cultural lines. Whether this is actually taking place is a different matter. Students tend to choose room-mates in a manner that reflects the boundaries of caste and community. Much depends upon the development of a total hostel experience for each resident, a result of good hostel administrative planning. IIT alumni claim that they are identified in later years by their Halls of residence more than in any other way, a fact that testifies to the strong impact hostel life makes on them.

CONDITIONS OF PEER-GROUP INFLUENCES

Newcomb⁵⁹ points out four conditions that acting singly or together facilitate peer-group influence upon members' attitudes. They are:

- (i) Size of the group.
- (ii) Relative homogeneity of group members.
- (iii) Relative isolation from groups having divergent group norms.
- (iv) The importance to individual members of the group-supported norms.

Homogeneity

In the Indian situation the condition of homogeneity is one that needs further investigation. Homogeneity of social group or religious affiliation creates an effective peer-group influence of the homogeneity of attitudes in these groups. We want to know whether homogeneity of attitudes results in a hardening of the old dividing lines. How does this hardening relate to the realization of the objectives of national integration and egalitarianism which colleges try to promote? We want to know what is the relative strength of the attributes of age, sex, caste or social class and religion for peer-group influence. How does the homogeneity factor correlate with the spread of cosmopolitanism? Educators may have been misled in their readings of the matter by mistaking the few cases of peer-groups on campuses that have transcended old dividing lines, to be a common occurrence.

Isolation

When it comes to peer-groups with norms and attitudes that are isolated from the dominant groups on campuses, what is the degree of the insulation of this small minority group from the influence of the majority groups? In a multi-faceted society the range and variety of minority groups is immense. We are interested to know more about the interpersonal relationships and influences that occur within the majority-minority dimension on any given campus.

Student Sub-culture

The existence of peer groups suggests that there may be distinct student sub-cultures to which college students belong by virtue of sharing common attitudes and values and styles of behaviour. Clarke and Trow identified four main types of college sub-cultures: the "collegiate", the "academic", the "vocational" and the "non-conformist", which they saw as correlated with the two basic dimensions of "identification with college" and "involvement with ideas"⁶⁰.

Collegiate Sub-culture

The collegiate sub-culture has its counterpart on our campuses — where the accent is on having a good time, participation in extra-curricular activities and sports and less involvement with academic work. The well-to-do student who has both means and the leisure is likely to belong to this sub-culture. The group is easily identifiable on the campus. Their involvement with ideas and things academic is minimal. Many would prefer the status of being "eternal" students if it were not for college policies regarding minimum grades to stay in college. This subculture is perhaps more a phenomenon of urban campuses, to which are also attracted affluent students from the heartland areas. As in the U.S. the subculture might imply strong loyalty to the college.

Academic Sub-culture

The academic subculture, is made up of those who take their academic work seriously and spend their time in the library or in

discussion of serious topics. Their academic performance is excellent. Students of this subculture may be concentrated in institutions reputed for their excellence. They may be drawn from classes with traditions of learning, but it is not unknown to have others also in this group. Most of them plan to continue with academic pursuits, going on to graduate studies and seeking placement in the upper echelons of the society's administrative services and in executive positions.

Vocational Sub-culture

Vocational subcultures on our campuses may include a larger group than the first two, considering the fact that so many students are in college for the very specific purpose of getting a degree which they consider to be a means to better prospects in the job market. There also is the value of the degree as a status symbol—all of which Riesman and Jenck have called "educational certification". For many it is a means to upward social mobility. The subculture does not promote academic pursuits beyond what is necessary to get a degree—"setting your flag at the pass mark level" as one vice-chancellor described it. The subculture is made up of a heterogenous group, not really interested in the college's program and is generally a bored, listless group, drifting along through the four years of college and even beyond into postgraduate work—all of which fail to make any noticeable change in their attitudes or values.

Nonconformist Sub-culture

The nonconformist subculture may include many types of non-conformity and perhaps is a feature of rather recent origin. The student activists on a campus who are involved in protesting against the establishment constitute one type. One such well-organized group claiming "the right to protest" and armed with their own style of subversive literature, which would appear on the campus without warning, created havoc on a Bombay campus and gave the administration some tense moments. Politically-oriented students who may be committed to an ideology of the right or left are another such group. The nonconforming intellectual type who is concerned with art or literature is a more rare type. Pop culture is yet another form, again a feature of urban

campuses. In a traditional culture, the forms of nonconformity may be many when treated as an expression of adolescent rebelliousness. It is the members of a nonconformist subculture group that are more open to manipulation by outside forces, to whom there is otherwise a poor campus response.

This broad division of subcultures enables a placing of the majority of students, though not of every one of them. There may be some who share the values and attitudes of more than one subculture. There may be others who do not fit into any category. We do not know how strong the influences of caste, community, language and region are in preventing students from identifying with any of these subcultures. We also do not know how well or not our women students fit into these subcultures, especially those who are from homes that are just beginning to give daughters higher education. Further, we expect that the distribution of these sub-cultures will be unequal on the different campuses. We suspect that the college's image regarding these subcultures on its campus, will be a determining factor in the type of students that will choose to attend that college. This image may be a factor that overrides all other considerations, in the choice of a college.

Bolton and Kammeyer hold that the concept of subculture has reference to "a normative-value system held by some group of persons who are in persisting interaction, who transmit the norms and values to newcomers by some communicative process and who exercise some sort of social control to ensure conformity to the norms".⁶¹ As a peer-group influence, subcultures have a place of high priority.

Finally we want to know how valid the broad typology of Clark and Trow is for Indian campuses. We have described above some ways in which these four subcultures have counterparts on our campuses. Do they account for the major types of subcultures of Indian students? Is there a large group on campuses generally that is not covered by this fourfold categorizing? In other words, do Indian students differ all that much from students in other parts of the world that they must be given a different kind of subcultural typology?

V. INFLUENCE OF SCARCITY

The grim picture of poverty under which the majority of Indian students take higher education is all too well known-poor living conditions (whether this is the home or a hired room), poor food with a skipping of meals a familiar experience, the external spectre of fee deadlines to be met one way or another, the lack of textbooks and other utilities regarded as basic for a student to acquit himself reasonably well. To which we must add the factor of wastage, whereby according to one estimate, no more than one fourths of entering university students obtain degrees.

The magnitude of the problem is of such proportions as to make any extensive scholarship aid program only of peripheral significance.

What kinds of influences do these conditions of deprivation and scarcity have on young minds? One of the most serious of these influences must be that of the demoralising attitude it generates, a defeating of the human spirit, that is unable to raise its head high even when conditions improve. The attitude of "You are my maa baap" continues into adulthood. The attitude in the "I am a poor boy" refrain does not change. What is changed is merely the agency to whom the plea is addressed. It is an attitude that generates a habit of mind that thinks that society owes him something in opposition to a mood of self-help and wanting to pull oneself up by one's bootstraps. This is not to deny that every campus has its success stories—from rags to riches in one generation. What is being discussed here is a more common predisposition that scarcity generates.

Another influence of scarcity is the mood of pessimism which takes hold of young minds. This mood must be in sharp contrast to the mood of college students in advanced countries and affluent students here. Jacob reported that "a dominant characteristic of students in the current generation is that they are *gloriously contented* both in regard to their present day-to-day activity and their careers, their family relations, the state of national or international society or the likelihood of their enjoying secure and happy lives. They are supremely confident that their destinies lie within their own control rather than in the grip of external circumstances"⁶². Affluent Indian students, many of them attending prestigious institutions reflect the same characteristics⁶³.

By contrast the student who is hard-pressed for finance becomes anxiety-ridden and overwhelmed by problems on all sides from which even the future promises no relief. The dim prospects of employment, the family responsibilities which he willy nilly will be expected to assume, both of the immediate family and the extended family make his life one of the gloom and "quiet desperation", while he is still in college

Campus unrest and malpractices sometimes find their beginnings in the discontent and desire for protest against the hard deal life has given them. The protest is voiced in various ways. If the student gets caught for copying at the examination, he is likely to justify his action by saying, "If you make the courses so difficult that we cannot pass them by honest means, we shall have to find other means to do so. Moreover everyone cheats anyway, so what is the harm?" His desire to protest makes him an easy recruit to campus unrest movements, in which wanton destruction of property and the vociferous shouting of slogans give outlet to his pent-up feelings.

VI—THE INFLUENCE OF CAMPUS PROGRAMS— ORGANIZED AND UNORGANIZED

ORGANIZED ACTIVITIES

Every campus has its share of debates, elocution competitions, plays, art, music and professional recitals, sports events and annual day celebrations. The culmination of these organized activities comes in December, a month of fun and merry-making and entertainment. Some colleges sponsor their own very special offering at this season an annual bazaar or a Winterfest...at the university level, an Inter Varsity Festival. The programs may unearth talent, if they are in the hands of imaginative people.... faculty and students. For these new "discoveries" the experience is rewarding and a spur to greater achievement. Not infrequently, there is a routine, this-has-been-done-before feeling to campus entertainment, easy to spot from the poor attendance. Once in a while there may be a plea, "Can't we be different this year and try out something new"? and the results may be surprisingly good.

All campus activities taking place outside the classroom do not have to be fun-oriented. They can be educative and enjoyable at

the same time. A play may have social and political implications that bring live issues in a way not otherwise possible. A one-act play competition in which students are encouraged to write and stage their own plays may bring unexpected returns, in terms of experiences of writing, directing and producing all in one.

One fact that is lost sight of, where organized activities are concerned, is that they really reach only a few. The majority of the students are left out, except perhaps as audience participants, and even here it is still a small group. Sports activities also are popular, with a few almost predictable types. A closely fought cricket or badminton finals might get more out to cheer their own side, but this may not be so common an occurrence. Much will depend upon the preponderance of subculture types on any given campus. If vocational subculture is dominant, extra-curricular activities are a dead loss in terms of interest and participation. Collegiate sub-cultures on campuses make for lively, and interesting extra-curricular programs.

National Service Scheme and National Cadet Corps.

Both have lofty ideals behind them. Pandit Nehru's brainchild was the NCC which was established to (a) develop character, comradeship and the ideal of service and capacity to leadership in young men and women; (b) provide service training to young men and women so as to stimulate interest in the defence of the country; and (c) build up a reserve of man-power to enable the Armed Forces to expand rapidly in a national emergency. By joining the NCC students have hoped to get different things out of it. Apart from the experiences and skills that they get from an NCC training, including self-reliance and poise, they hope to increase their job potential. The debate on NCC still goes on—has it been able to do what it started out to do?

The objective of the National Service Scheme inaugurated in 1969 was to give an opportunity for students to devote their leisure time in the service of the nation through participation in the program of nation building, social service and development. An enhancement of their knowledge and skills through a confrontation with the realities of the nation's problems, the ability to initiate social action projects and a training for democratic leadership were visualised as being the kinds of effects participation in the NSS

programs would have on students. The selectivity factor has operated in the implementation of NSS programs both in terms of colleges that were selected for location of NSS units, as well as in terms of the students who were selected to participate in them. There have been colleges who can claim a high degree of success in their NSS projects. Students, face to face with instances of social injustices, were roused to a righteous indignation which in turn worked for a change in their attitudes, said one college. A new sense of discipline and social responsibility was fostered among students of the NSS, another college claimed. But not all colleges had imaginative programs, and some did not have the understanding or sympathy of the managements for an effective NSS program.

The debate on NSS continues. How can it be made more effective? Should it be made compulsory? Can it be incorporated into the curriculum, in a way that rids it of its extra-curricular status, with all the implications of that status? How can subject syllabi be related to NSS?

After seven years of the existence of NSS we should really have empirical data on which to base changes of perspectives or directions of the NSS. There ought to be some way of knowing how well or not objectives are being achieved and what types of effects the NSS does have on students. How far has it been able to engender "national consciousness and social commitment by inculcating among the students a sense of discipline and a dignity of labour" as the Estimate Committees of the Lok Sabha recommends that it do? We must have more concrete data to answer these questions than just reports of activities of the different units. In the absence of such data we can only hope that objectives are being achieved.

CAMPUS MINISTRY—MORAL AND RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION PROGRAMS

Many colleges offer a formal program of religious and moral instruction, organized on a compulsory or voluntary basis and giving a choice to opt for the more universalistic moral instruction course or the particularistic religion course. In the curriculum itself, there are courses such as philosophy of religion and Ancient Indian

Culture which acquaint students with the systems of Indian culture or of a particular religion.

We are interested to know in what way these formalized means are used to develop and promote a philosophy of society, in which students would be encouraged to question the "assumed values of society or the institutions of society on the basis of religious norms", as Dickinson describes it. Is the moral instruction course a mere as he puts it "moralism without roots in intellectually challenging and satisfying foundations."⁶⁴ How do these courses help students to think about the place of religion in a modern pluralistic society or to see how the idea of a secular society fits into traditional teachings of a given religion? A competent and nationally known university teacher of philosophy opposed tooth and nail the inclusion of a philosophy of religion course in the blueprint for undergraduate syllabi that was being prepared by a UGC-sponsored Workshop for modernization of philosophy courses. His plea was that the course would be taught in a manner that would defeat the purpose of its inclusion in the syllabus because one could be certain that particularistic approaches would weigh over universalistic ones and those calculated to increase understanding of the various tenets and beliefs of the different religions. Its omission was to be preferred to this possible gross abuse of the course!

BULL SESSION⁶⁵ (better described as "gossip" session)

In a study at a leading college of the West of how leisure time was spent, 72 percent of the students put "engage in bull sessions" at the top of their list.

Described as an informal and spontaneous conversation between two or more persons on subjects which range from personal experiences to campus topics, from popular movies or film stars to intellectual matters, the bull session must be considered to be an important source of finding out what college students are thinking about and therefore an indirect means of knowing what things are making some impact on them. It surely is a popular pastime on our campuses, sometimes taking place even in the crowded classroom right under the eye of the teacher! The close social interaction that takes place in a bull session can also serve as a source of influence, by which attitudes, values and stereotypes undergo change. One can only hazard a guess that personal topics

will rate highest, followed by campus and film gossip. Intellectual topics are likely to include political and economic and religious and societal matters, but perhaps more from a personal point of view than as an academic discussion of issues. Scientific and technical matters are more likely to figure in sessions on the professional college campuses, than elsewhere. The sex composition of the group as well as its intellectual, social and economic background are bound to determine the selection of topics and the level at which they will be talked about, whether as trivia or as seriously considered matters.

VII—OFF-CAMPUS INFLUENCE

1. INFLUENCE OF COMMUNICATION MEDIA

In transitional societies, as Pye says, "It will be the creation of new channels of communication and the ready acceptance of new content of communications which will be decisive in determining the prospects of nation building."⁶⁶

Some analysis of the content of communication, as it reaches young people in college, through the mass media—the press, the radio and television and films—is necessary to understand in what directions they are being influenced. It is particularly important to see how the media exposes them to new ways of thinking "and the adoption of new attitudes".

As is the case with other areas of influences, there is little empirical data on the basis of which assessments about the effectiveness of mass media in this respect can be made. Yuva Vani, which is an ambitious experiment in youth broadcasting launched in 1969, seems to have limited effectiveness and awaits "a more dynamic and youth-oriented set up for it". Right now it seems to have ended up as "carbon copy of its parent body the AIR". There is evidence that urban students keep informed about public affairs through the radio news broadcasts and the newspapers. But more data is needed on this matter. Is it the regional language broadcasts or press that is popular? How do they portray parochial against national or universal values? How do they portray sensational news items particularly those that deal with the supernatural and irrational, for which the common man at least seems to provide a gullible public. Do newspapers foster a

development of critical acumen, by publishing all aspects of a news item, that then enable the reader to make a proper assessment of it? A host of such questions needs answers.

When we come to the radio as a source of entertainment, one might venture to guess that Vividh Bharati and Radio Ceylon command the largest listening public among the young and not so young, as they serve their fare of pure unadulterated film and light music.

INFLUENCE OF THE HINDI CINEMA — "GO FILMI" SYNDROME.

A consideration of the powerful influence the Hindi commercial cinema exerts upon young Indian minds, not the least among whom are school and college students, makes an indictment of it almost inescapable. "Do you think, love and dream in cinemascope and colour?" asks a popular young people's magazine and this is no idle question ⁶⁷

The popularity of the Hindi cinema has reached immense proportions in recent times, with an appeal equally to the sophisticated, who not so long ago would have shunned it in favor of foreign movies and the totally unlettered (though, as one medical student carefully explained, "we look for different things in these movies"). As a leisure-time activity and a source of entertainment, it has no competitors. Even radio and television have succumbed—witness the TV Chhaya Geet and Sunday-film show audiences and the Binaca Geet Mala listeners!

Colleges, which in any case do not attempt to program the time of their students outside classroom hours, would find it hard going to compete with this world of fantasy and make-believe, of living glowing colours and escapist fare. Its potency as a trend-setting medium is reflected in the hair and dress styles and mannerisms that young people affect (Delhi U campus, it is claimed has no less than four Rajesh Khannas!), not to mention the replacement of campus conversation with "filmi dialogue"—verbatim reproductions of entire passages from the films. Dance and music themes at college social events are certainly going to be "filmi", stifling creativity and originality.

The appeal of the Hindi cinema has to be sought beyond the standard norms of explanation. An unusual insight in this direction

was provided by a colleague who saw Hindi films as providing for young people, however superficially, a resolution of "traditional" and "modern" values and styles of life—a world into which it was easy to enter, through identification and vicarious fulfilment.

What specific influences might be seen as being exerted upon college students by Hindi films? What specious effects? Lacking empirical substantiation, especially from the student themselves, we can only suggest that:

- (i) Hetero-sexual behaviour as depicted in the films has a carry-over effect to real life, posing a conflict situation for the young mind between the "modern" style sanctioned by the film and the traditional style of one's upbringing.
- (ii) An inability to distinguish between real life situations and make-believe is fostered so that one begins to imagine that there can be magical and miraculous solutions to life's problems much in the style of the series of happy coincidences that bring the film to a close. Credulity is thus not strained and naivete exposed, and the lines between fact and fiction remain blurred.
- (iii) Irrational and unscientific notions of reality, which abound in a traditional society are reinforced by depictions on the screen. A psychology major found it hard to accept a parapsychology department's findings on "memory of a previous life". For her own views, she had the support of a film she had seen.
- (iv) A philosophy of life of sorts is parcelled out in the form of cliches and time-worn platitudes and empty profundities (the secret of the appeal of "filmi dialogue"?).
- (v) The recent ban on the depiction of violence and drinking on the screen suggests that there has been an adverse effect on young people in these respects.
- (vi) Hindi films have brought a multi-religious and multi-regional awareness to its viewing public, even if sometimes through the use of stereotyped imagery.
- (vii) They portray values that foster national integration, and have all the educative value of a travelogue.

- (viii) Their social and moral themes, give wide expression to injustices in society.
- (ix) Cross-subcultural dance and music themes have gained a popularity and acceptability through Hindi films that otherwise could not have been possible. An inter college youth festival attracted no fewer than eight Adivasi group dance items all performed by men students with the Bhangra dance a ninth !

(2) STUDENTS AND POLITICS—ADVERSE INFLUENCES

No subject has been of greater concern to the authorities and of greater interest to scholars than that of student involvement with politics and of student unrest generally. The complex nature of the factors that are correlated with both have made it difficult to find explanations that fit all the types and forms of involvement and unrest. Di Bona, for instance, identified five categories of indiscipline on the campus.⁶⁸

Explanations of student unrest range from those of "economic deprivation" to those of "psychological alienation". One study gave four main causes of student unrest as: (i) lack of proper academic atmosphere (ii) absence of respect for authority—parental, educational and governmental (iii) ideological frustration and (iv) political interference.⁶⁹ Student involvement in politics takes on different hues in different locations and seems more endemic in some regions than in others. Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal have a high degree of student political activism. Maharashtra students were relatively passive, and so were those in the South till recently. Case studies of the universities of Ranchi, Osmania, Allahabad, Baroda, Mysore and Bombay to cite only a few, have yielded valuable data on the subject.⁷⁰

Studies have also revealed that there are institutional variations in student unrest. Arts colleges (missionary-urban), Science colleges (urban and rural) and Institutes of Technology rated low on student indiscipline, while Arts colleges (private, urban) and professional colleges (commerce, law) rated high.⁷¹

Other conclusions drawn from in-depth studies establish that most colleges were not disrupted by student agitations, and that in

those cases where agitation took place it is a small number of students that are actually actively involved, despite an impression to the contrary. A correlation has also been found between types of leadership—"academic" and "agitational"—and the types of activities on campus.⁷² It is also known that most of the demands of the students concerned "local" campus issues or local issues *per se*, a shift from the societal emphasis of the independence movement to etudialist issues of the 1960's. It has also been established that the partisan students—those "willing to support a political party... are older..., male students of low socio-economic status, living isolated lives while attending college".⁷³ Local campus issues are known to trigger off a more widespread agitation, in which the causes for the indiscipline must be sought in the discontent and frustration over inadequate educational facilities and prospects of employment.

Political parties, through their youth wings and connections with student unions have attempted to keep in touch with student unions. They become deeply involved with student affairs and either stimulate agitation or enter the fray after it has begun. This interference results generally in the agitation getting out of hand, or even turning violent. Most educational authorities and a large majority of students would rather be allowed to solve their own campus problems, without outside interference. Agitations have disrupted the smooth running of institutions in a way that is disproportionate to the nature and significance of the demand that is being made. We need studies to find out what influence this disruption of the institution has had on the career of students, on their desire to get on with the business in hand. We need to know how the ideology of a given political party which is active on any campus influences the attitudes of the students with whom they come in contact. In this connection we need to know how faculty members belonging to these parties influence their students through their contacts with them.

Netta Spencer found that "politicized leftist oriented Indian students have modern values on caste, family and communal relations, are mistrustful of the goodwill and helpfulness of most other persons, skeptical that "will power" has much efficacy in bringing about success, fatalistic (not in the traditional sense of "fate" but in the conviction that "social and economic conditions beyond one's control cause more things than one's own efforts

do''). They are less often religious and do not regard respect for superiors as important for success. They report more symptoms of psychological distress and more authoritarian values in matters of child discipline and military retaliation than do less ideologically committed students'. The study examined 'politicized leftism' as a dependent variable to be explained in terms of 'pre-existing personality traits, or the differing characteristics of the roles for which the academic disciplines prepare students or the differential recruitment from different social classes, regions or backgrounds.'⁷⁴

What kinds of influences do organizations such as the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad or the Samajwadi Yuvak Sabha or the All India Students' Federation or the Yuvak Congress have on their members? What is the type of student to whom ideology of any of these political youth groups might have an appeal? And finally, what does the college's liberalizing atmosphere, assuming for a moment that such an atmosphere is created by a college, do to a student already committed to any one? Does it change him in any significant way?

VIII AFTER-INFLUENCES

What do educators assess the effects of a college education to be? A president of a leading university said that "in the long run educated man is the yeast in our social dough."⁷⁵ How do colleges assist in the development of the educated man?

College years were estimated to be "not only crucially formative ones as far as attitudes and values are concerned but they offer what amounts to 'the last chance' for enlightenment before entering the 'thruway of life.'"⁷⁶

What assumptions can be made about the effects of these college years? For some students in some measure we assume that:

- (i) Much of the information that was received in college will be forgotten. But the whole "intellectual legacy" of this period will not be lost. An understanding of the principles at work in society, as he learned about them in his courses will be retained, so that he can continue to make intelligent appraisals of what he sees, reads and is involved in, in society.

- (ii) An appreciation of other cultures will have been developed as also a broadening of perspectives through learning that truth, art and culture are not the monopoly of any one group or people.
- (iii) The student has learned to make a distinction between subjective and objective judgements, those based on emotions or blind faith as opposed to those based on facts and reason.
- (iv) The student's value system and attitudes have undergone some change so that he holds his social, political, cultural and religious views with greater discernment than before.
- (v) The student begins to appreciate the value system of a modern society as being intrinsically worthwhile and good, and not because it is super-imposed upon him by some authority.
- (vi) The student is led to a concern for others, a social awareness that brings him a sense of social responsibility. In this sense he becomes an agent for social reform.

When we think of the college experience placed as it is within the whole period of a student's life, we cannot help but assume that it must leave some impact on him. What we need to know at a later period from the students themselves—and students become alumni – is what influences he thought college had on him and how they affect his life as he lives it now. How many have been able to practise what they were once convinced about? What kinds of confrontations do they encounter in society and how do they cope? Do they make compromises... so that they develop their own norms of what "modern" is and set up a world of self-deception to live in, which they think is very modern, but is really not the real thing at all? The heartening thing about education is that each generation starts at a position which is more liberal than a previous one and for this at least colleges can take the credit.

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Suggestions for Further Study on the Topic*

1. Youth Culture :
 - (a) its dimensions
 - (b) the extent of its pervasiveness
 - (c) its *raison d'être*
 - (d) nature and types of regional campus subcultures (non-metropolitan)
2. Meaning of modernity for college youth; In what ways modern ideas and values have influenced the students so that they are "different" from before.
3. What part the home has had in preparing them for creating and living in a modern society.
4. Identification of influences the school has had on them, particularly with reference to modern ideas and values.
5. What kind of personality changes and changes in ideas and values take place in college and what factors are seen as being responsible for these changes? Precise data are needed on the influence of the curriculum, the teacher, the management, peer groups and hostels etc.
6. What peer groups and student subcultures are identified by students, and what kinds of dividing lines do students observe in their social relations?
7. Can students identify some negative influences on the campus which they feel had a detrimental effect on their development?
8. What kinds of influences would students and faculty like to see take place—both within the existing campus structures and in terms of innovations?
9. What influences do students see emanating from bull sessions, communication media, especially the cinema, and political parties?

* The need is for empirical data from students to give greater understanding of the types of influences that bear upon them. It is suggested that questionnaires may be prepared to elicit specific information. If discussions are held particularly with senior students who can look back on their college experience, rapporteurs must keep detailed records. Brief written statements may also be obtained in specific items. New perspectives or insights different from those offered in this paper are invited as also identification of influences not covered by it.

